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SECRETCENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

SUBJECT Vulko Chervenkov's Position

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DATE DISTR. 25 Feb 1954

1. Throughout 1953 there were continual signs of an internal struggle between the Bulgarian Communist leaders, though its exact nature is only now becoming clear. It seems to have been due to an effort by Vulko Chervenkov to support the new Bulgarian patriarch and the Patriarch of Moscow, against the group represented by Michailov, Chankov, and Panchevsky. But Ivan Michailov is really the eye of the Kremlin in Bulgaria, and it is hard--at least for the moment--to put up any sort of resistance to him.
2. Chervenkov is therefore getting things organized for a struggle that is still to come. He hopes to upset Michailov, by going after his collaborators and showing that certain of them have not been very loyal in applying the principles of the regime.
3. Chervenkov's main difficulty right now is that he has so few supporters among the workers. When he visited the factory at Gabrovo, which supplies the army, his portrait was found lying on the floor. Nobody even bothered to pick it up, until the director of the factory himself did so. Chervenkov also meets with a very frosty reception when he tries to make a speech before a working class group. He is not a very sympathetic figure, with his bull neck and disagreeable voice.
4. When making inspections, Chervenkov always travels with three cars full of militia, who always have their Tommy guns in hand. Usually, Chervenkov himself wears workers' clothing, with a cap from which a few locks of black hair protrude.
5. Chervenkov now has to rely for support on the illiterate or the good-for-nothing element in the Bulgarian Communist Party. To help himself along, he manages to get hold of money, for secret distribution, so as to gain supporters. Though his enemies inside the Party are strong, Chervenkov is not, as yet, in an especially vulnerable position. He still seems, so far as one can learn, to be very highly regarded by the Soviet Government.

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